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PUEBLO OF LAGUNA
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Office of:
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November 22, 2011

Dr. Al Armendariz
Regional Administrator (6RA)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

RE: Pueblo of Laguna Letter of Support for the NPL Listing



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Dear Dr. Armendariz:

In reference to Pueblo of Laguna Resolution No. 10-10, dated February 2, 2010, regarding the Approval of Application for Designation of Jackpile Mine Area as a Superfund Site, this letter is submitted to concur with the listing of Jackpile Mine Site on the National Priority List (NPL) during the next NPL update in March of 2012.

The Jackpile mine, once the largest open pit uranium mine in the world, is located near the Village of Pagate on the Laguna Indian Reservation. During the 29 years of continuous, 24 hour per day, operations from 1953 to 1982, the mine handled 400 million tons of rock and yielded 24 million tons of uranium ore, which was shipped to processing facilities in Grants/Milan, NM and other areas.

The mine closed in 1982 and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was completed in 1986. Due to a lack of specific regulations pertaining to reclamation of uranium mines, Pueblo of Laguna, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Bureau of Land Management jointly adopted the Record of Decision (ROD) document to guide the reclamation work, which started in 1989 and was completed in 1995. Reclaiming a mine of this size proven to be no easy task and the Pueblo of Laguna is still coping with many side effects of mining. The legacy issues include, but are not limited to, elevated to highly elevated levels of isotopic uranium in surface water below the mine area in Rio Pagate and Rio San Jose. The water is our most valuable natural resource, and surface water is a primary source for irrigation, livestock and wildlife on the reservation. There is also a very important factor, with direct impact to human health, of protecting the traditional and cultural uses of surface water.

The subsequent Resolution No. 58-10, dated June 22, 2010, approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Pueblo of Laguna and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 regarding CERCLA Activities to ensure the protection of human health and environment. Both resolutions authorize the Governor to take all actions necessary to convey the Pueblo's position on this matter to the EPA.

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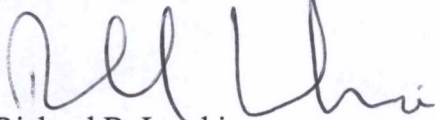
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

Therefore, the Pueblo of Laguna is in full support of listing the Jackpile Mine Site on the NPL and we are looking forward to working with EPA Region 6 to address the impacts of past uranium mining to Laguna's natural and cultural resources.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

PUEBLO OF LAGUNA

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Richard B. Luarkie', written over the printed name.

Richard B. Luarkie,
Governor

cc: Adam Ringia, ENRD Acting Director
Barbara Cywinska-Bernacik, Environmental Program Manager
Ladonna Turner, EPA, Risk and Site Assessment Section
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